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Ontario

Ontario Women's Directorate

NEWSRELEASE

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ONTARIO GOVERNMENT HELPING WOMEN GET BETTER JOBS
Promoting Women's Economic Independence

QUEEN'S PARK – The Ontario government today announced funding to help unemployed and low-income women in Toronto train for good jobs in the information technology field through its Information Technology Training Program for Women (ITTW).

"Our government is committed to building a strong economy in which every Ontarian can reach his or her potential," said Sandra Pupatello, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues. "This program is helping women learn the skills they need to secure good jobs and be economically independent."

The ITTW program subsidizes training for unemployed or low-income women, new immigrants with IT skills but who lack Canadian experience, and for women with disabilities. It includes technical training and an on-the-job work placement, as well as IT industry certification testing within the curriculum. About 75 per cent of graduates from this program secure jobs in the field.

"Many of the women who enroll in this program face special challenges, particularly recent immigrants who often need extra support to adjust to a new environment and lifestyle," said Dr. Shafiq Qaadri, MPP for Etobicoke North. "This unique women-only program addresses the larger picture, by not only teaching technical skills but also helping students to understand what is expected in the workplace".

MicroSkills Community Development Centre in Etobicoke, in partnership with Dixon Hall in downtown Toronto, has received $1,379,733 from the Ontario Women's Directorate to offer 52-week courses in information technology at three levels – ranging from women with little or no computer skills or work experience, to women who need to upgrade their skills and gain work experience. An introductory course will be offered at Dixon Hall, with more advanced courses at the MicroSkills campus. The first classes started in early February with other classes beginning throughout the year.

Participating employers have high praise for the program .

"Our company will continue to offer IT internships to new graduates of this program," said Peter Vale, Manager of the Computer Department of CH2M HILL Canada Limited. "We are also pleased to offer job shadowing opportunities and arrange for mentors who can provide extra support for the women as they look for their first permanent job."

The first courses started on February 7. For more information about the ITTW program at MicroSkills Community Development Centre and Dixon Hall call Rodica Balaci (416) 247-7181, ext. 245, or visit microskills.ca.

- 30 -

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TOP

| Ontario Women's Directorate | About the OWD | News Releases | Facts and Statistics | How to Reach Us | Publications and Resources | A Guide to Government Services For Women | Related Sites | Grants | FAQ | Text Version |

| central site | feedback | search | site map | français |

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